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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-04 MCT-01 /062 W
----------104663 221314Z /50
R 221118Z JAN 78
FM AMCONSUL TABRIZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 232
INFO AMCONSUL ISFAHAN POUCH
AMCONSUL SHIRAZ POUCH
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN POUCH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TABRIZ 0004

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IR PINS
SUBJ: DEMONSTRATIONS IN TABRIZ

1. SUMMARY. ON 14 JANUARY A STUDENT DEMONSTRATION AT TABRIZ'S AZARABADEGAN UNIVERSITY RESULTED IN DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS AND VEHICLES ON THE CAMPUS, AND THE TABRIZ BAZAAR WAS CLOSED BECAUSE OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS THERE THE SAME DAY. IN ANSWER TO THE ABOVE INCIDENTS, A MASSIVE PRO-GOVERNMENT RALLY WAS HELD IN TABRIZ ON 17 JANUARY. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JAN 14 DURING THE END-OF-SEMESTER EXAM PERIOD, AZARABADEGAN UNIVERSITY SAW ANOTHER OF ITS RECENTLY SPORADIC

PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS. ALLEGEDLY IN SUPPORT OF PREVIOUS DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE RELIGIOUS CENTER OF QOM AND THE TEHRAN BAZAAR, THE TABRIZ CAMPUS ACTIVITY RESULTED IN DAMAGE TO SEVERAL UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS AND ALSO TO VEHICLES PARKED ON THE CAMPUS. ONEWITNESS CLAIMED THAT APPROXIMATELY FIFTY STUDENTS TOOK PART IN THE PROTEST, AND THAT TWICE THAT NUMBER OF POLICE WERE PRESENT TO STOP THE ACTIVITY.
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3. ON THE SAME DAY, AND AGAIN ALLEGEDLY IN PROTEST OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION IN QOM, A DEMONSTRATION AND FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN THE CENTER OF TABRIZ'S ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE BAZAAR AREA. THE BAZAAR WAS ORDERED CLOSED FOR THE DAY, AND SOME SHOPS HAVE REMAINED SHUT. SPECIFIC TARGETS OF THE BAZAAR DEMONSTRATORS WERE LOCAL BRANCHES

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OF THE SADERAT BANK AND THE COMMERCIAL (BAZARGAN) BANK, BOTH OF WHICH ARE POPULARLY RUMORED TO BE CONTROLLED BY ADHERENTS OF THE BAHAI FAITH.

4. JAN 17 SAW THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE INCIDENTS WITH A MASSIVE RALLY TO SHOW TABRIZ'S SUPPORT FOR THE REGIME. ALL SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND STATE FACTORIES IN THE AREA WERE ORDERED SHUT, AND THE STUDENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND FACTORY WORKERS WERE COMMANDED TO GATHER TOGETHER IN FRONT OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR'S OFFICE BUILDING. SPEECHES WERE MADE BY REPRESENTATIVES OF DIFFERENT PROFESSIONAL AND WORKERS' GROUPS (INCLUDING THE CLERGY) TO A CROWD OFFICIALLY ESTIMATED AT FIFTY THOUSAND, A NOT UNLIKELY FIGURE GIVEN THE STUDENT WORKER POPULATION ORDERED TO ATTEND.
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